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HISTORY

torted would go into his own pocket; that if he refused to be the agent of the ladies they would find agents less humane ; that by complying he should increase his influence at the court, and that his influence at the court had already enabled him, and might still enable him, to render great services to his oppressed brethren.¹

The charge is false. It rests on a confusion between William Penn and a certain George Penn, who had no connection with the great Quaker. Finding a document which mentions Mr* Penn as employed in this matter, Macaulay followed Mackintosh² in assuming that Mr. Penn necessarily meant William Penn, though there is no further evidence of any kind against William Penn and there is good evidence that George Penn was employed in other cases to extort similar ransoms from persons concerned in Monmouth's rebellion,

The next important charge is that Penn was employed by James II in 1687 to induce the Fellows of Magdalen College to give way to his demands. According to Macaulay, after the Fellows had refused to yield to the King's threats, James employed the agency of Penn in the hope that the college ' might still be terrified, caressed, or bribed into submission ' . He goes on to relate Penn's interview with the Fellows and his attempt to ' seduce the college from the path of right *.³ An examination of the evidence shows

that Penn was concerned in the affair as
the agent of
the college rather than of the King. He
interceded with
the King on behalf of the college, and that
not once but
twice over. Far from trying to persuade the
Fellows to give
way he wrote to James that ' in their
circumstances, they

*II, 6₄₅(v).

~ History of the Revolution (1834), i.
202.

*II, 948 (viii).